



Tuesday, February 16, 2021  
Via Teleconference  
2:00pm – 4:00pm  
Minutes

**Attendees:**

**Cabinet Members:**

Kelly Schulz, Secretary, Department of Commerce, Chair  
Ken Holt, Secretary, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD)  
Jimmy Rhee, Special Secretary, Governor's Office of Small Minority and Women Business Affairs (GOSBA)  
Tiffany Robinson, Secretary, Department of Labor  
Ben Grumbles, Secretary, Department of Environment (MDE)  
Greg Slater, Secretary, Department of Transportation (MDOT)  
Robert McCord, Secretary, Department of Planning (MDP)  
Jim Fielder, Secretary, Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC)  
Michael Higgs, Director of Assessments & Taxation (SDAT)  
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary, Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR)  
Joe Bartenfelder, Secretary, Department of Agriculture (MDA)  
Wendi Peters, Special Secretary, Smart Growth

**Guests:**

Meredith Wimbrow, Office of the Governor  
Ryan Snow, Governor's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (GOIA)  
Gretchen Hardman, GOIA  
Deputy Secretary Horacio Tablada MDE  
Deputy Secretary Earl Lewis MDOT  
Deputy Secretary Julie Oberg, MDA  
Allison Cordell, Governor's Office of Performance Improvement (GOPI)  
Kenrick Gordon, Governor's Office of Rural Broadband  
David Dahlstrom, Labor  
Mike Pantelides, Labor  
Janice Walker-Emeogo, Labor  
Roseanne Fish, Labor  
Todd Scott, DHCD  
Joe Griffiths, MDP  
Jennifer Ruffner, MDP  
David Dahlstrom, MDP  
Carrie Cook, DNR  
Nichole Parker, Parker Phillips  
Kristin Keene, Maryland Port Administration

**Commerce Staff:**

Andrew Sargent  
Brigitte Peters

Elizabeth Carven  
Jayson Knott  
Julie Woepke  
Kyle McColgan  
Michael Siers  
Rhonda Ray  
Roger Venezia  
Sarah Sheppard  
Signe Pringle  
Tom Riford  
Wade Hearle

## **I. Call to Order**

Secretary Schulz called the meeting to order at 2:00pm.

## **I. Review and approval of December 21, 2020 Minutes**

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, the minutes of the December 21, 2020 meeting approved.

## **II. Chair Update**

Secretary Schulz provided an update on the status of the funds distributed to the hospitality, lodging and restaurants industries to date. She introduced Heather Gramm, Senior Director, Strategic Industries and Entrepreneurship who gave an update on the Maryland Entrepreneur Hub and the Maryland Reshoring Initiative. Secretary Schulz then introduced Michael Siers, Economist, who provided an update on the unemployment rate by county, impacts to industry sectors and industries where Maryland is leading in recovery.

Secretary Schulz then introduced Assistant Secretary Tom Riford who provided a tourism update noting the continuation of the Open Road Campaign, the Underground Railroad Certified Host training program kick off, continued strong traffic to the tourism website, and the collaboration with DHCD for the Main Street Maryland Mondays.

The Commerce presentation continued with Jayson Knott providing an update on major opportunities activity representing at least 25 new jobs. All presentations on file.

## **III. Department of Labor Update**

Secretary Tiffany Robinson provided an overview of the Department's significant activity since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. She highlighted the unprecedented volume of claims, unemployment statistics, unemployment fraud, and the continuation of support reflected in the RELIF Act of 2021. She then concluded by giving an update on the Department's Legislative Priorities and provided unemployment contact information for distribution. Presentation on file. Secretary Robinson then departed the meeting.

## **IV. Legislative Updates**

The Subcabinet provided overviews on their Department's Legislative Priorities.

## **V. Maryland Heritage Areas Authority Economic Impact Study Update**

Ms. Jennifer Ruffner, Administrator, Maryland Heritages Areas Program, MDP and Ms. Nichole Parker, President + Principal, Parker Phillips presented the findings of a study reflecting an annual impact of \$2.4 billion resulting from the Program. Among the impacts highlighted, they noted the local and state tax impact, number of visitors to Heritage Areas, jobs supported and the participation of nine (9) State Agencies. Ms. Ruffner and Ms. Parker answered questions from the Subcabinet. Presentation on file.

## **VI. Broadband Update**

Mr. Kenrick “Rick” Gordon, Executive Director, Governor’s Office of Rural Broadband, provided an overview of the FY20 Broadband Programs and COVID-19 Related Funding; and the FY21 Broadband Programs for Rural Unserved Areas and applications received. He then took questions from the Subcabinet. Presentation on file.

## **VII. Subcabinet Workgroups**

Due to time limitations, only two (2) of the Workgroup Leaders of the five (5) Workgroups presented. All presentation and reports are on file

## **VIII. Good of the Order**

No addition information presented.

## **IX. Adjournment**

There being no further discussion and upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting adjourned at 4:00pm.